

City of Detroit

CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILMAN JAMES E. TATE, JR.

May 22, 2012

Senator Rick Jones
Chair, Michigan State Senate Judiciary Committee
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

Dear Chairman Jones:

I am sending this correspondence in support of "Blight Elimination" legislation SB 1096-1100.

For years, cities like Detroit have sought meaningful solutions to the epidemic of blighted properties that plague the landscape of their communities. Scofflaw property owners are ticketed for violations, but too often disregard their obligation to upkeep their properties. Blighted properties discourage growth and development and too often become a breeding ground for criminal activity. Owners of the blighted properties typically do not reside within the communities where the eyesores are located and leave residents who live in the vicinity of the properties forced to deal with the negative effects and lowered quality of life that they bring. Though there are often ordinances in place to address blighted properties, they often lack strong enforcement mechanisms that compel compliance from those who refuse to abide by the law.

I believe SB 1096-1100 to be the most effective legislation proposed to date that forces accountability among those individuals who refuse to comply with the laws that focus on blight remediation. The Bills effectively help strengthen land use policy by prohibiting municipalities from issuing zoning approval or building permits to those who possess unaddressed blight violations. They also simplify the lien process to ensure the payment of judgments against blight violators as well as streamline the garnishment procedure on owners who do not pay the fines following their appeal. Another aspect that I find most appealing is that the legislation clarifies that failure to comply with a blight hearing judgment can be classified as a misdemeanor and prosecuted at district court.

So I am urging that the committee approve this legislation, so that we can begin to address blight issues, not only in Detroit, but in other cities around the State of Michigan.

Sincerely,



James E. Tate, Jr.

Cc. Senator Steve Bieda
Senator Tory Rocca
Senator Tonya Schuitmaker
Senator Virgil Smith

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center 2 Woodward Ave., Suite 1340 Detroit, Michigan 48226
(313) 224-1027 Fax (313) 224-0372